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Kols generally believe that the soul of the child enters and possesses its new body before the child is born. The more general opinion is that the movements of the child in the womb, which first occur about the sixth month, are the signs that the body has received its soul and is already a person. The soul is a gift to the child by Paramatma, and it enters the child's body through the mouth, nose or ears. The Kols' idea of the state and nature of the soul before entering the child's body is very vague and it is unusual to find any clear idea of transmigration and previous existence in another body.

Delivery. There is no uncleanness attached to the woman up to the time of the birth of her baby, but for six days thereafter she is considered unclean. The actual delivery of the child always occurs at home for no use is made of hospitals or the like.

When the time of birth is near the female relatives who have come for the occasion take charge of her. No male members of the family are allowed in the delivery room and men are kept out for the six days following. In a few places however we learned that they might enter after three days. Her mother-in-law and her sister are the ones to make the arrangements and do the actual work, although other female members of the two families may stand ready to assist. The woman awaits her time in a darkened room protected as far as possible from the entry of evil spirits. A few hours before (and sometimes just at the time) birth is expected a mid-wife—*dai*—is summoned. The Kols usually summon a Chamarin, or if she is not available, a Basorin. Sometimes, particularly around Jubbulpore, the Basorin seems to be preferred. If the birth should occur before the *dai* arrives the women in the house can do everything except the cutting of the umbilical cord. In one place we asked what would happen if the *dai* did not arrive and they replied that before a Kolin would cut the cord they would have to let the mother and baby die! Some Kols are said to do it themselves, but we did not find any who admitted that they do so. If the child should be born in a field the mother gathers up the child and the after-birth in her *sari* and carries it home and then the *dai* is called to cut the cord and care for the infant.

The birth usually occurs with the mother squatted on the floor, seated on her heels and bending over a large basket placed upside down on the floor, her head meanwhile resting on her hands. The female relatives support her and give encouragement. The *dai* is the one to receive the child. No one in the family should touch the child until it has first been purified by the *dai*. This applies to the mother as well. The *dai* cuts the umbilical cord with an iron instrument which

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787 Opening his eyes in the morning and seeing a cow, or observing a cow before he gets up.
Coming across the roller bird (*Coracias indica*).

Bad omens include:
Meeting a person carrying an empty vessel of any kind.
Seeing some newly broken pots the first thing after stepping out of the house in the morning.
Meeting a *teli*, or member of the oil-making caste; but if he smiles so that his teeth are seen, it is all right.
Involuntary sneezing just as one is starting out anywhere.
Observing a dead body either being carried or just lying by the roadside, as in the case of an animal.
To see a jackal crossing the road from either direction.
To meet any deformed person.
To hear an ass [illegible] howling
To be startled by the sudden falling of a branch or tree.
The bark of a fox at night means a death in the village before dawn.
To see a crow sitting on the back of a pig or on a man's head.

787 774 828 513 SLEEP AND DREAMS. Animistic tribes and castes pay close attention to dreams. Kols believe that dreams are evidence that souls wander about over the earth during the hours that one is unconscious in sleep. The soul may then wander far and wide, but no one is ever really able to trace its movements. In a split second it can go great distances and is in no way limited by space. And yet, though the soul wanders about, it does not entirely sever its connection with the body, else the person dreaming would die. Kols believe that a thin thread something like a telegraph wire always connects the two. The soul, even though it is far from the body, is still conscious of what is going on at the house as long as this connection is not tampered with.

During the period when a soul is wandering here and there it may be attacked by an evil spirit. This attack is made known to the body through the thin thread, and the result is that the body talks, groans and shouts in its sleep, the intensity depending upon the seriousness of the attack. At such a time the person should be awakened, though not too suddenly, for this will force the soul to return and the possibility of its being injured will be avoided. If the sleeper should not be wakened, the spirit will return eventually, but will doubtless be injured, perhaps fatally.

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A sleeper should never be awakened rudely or directly, for to do so is dangerous to him and may bring a curse upon the person awakening him. If it is found necessary to awaken another person a noise should be made from a distance and should gradually be increased. This gives the soul time to get back. Kols believe that if one dies in his sleep it may be due to the spirit being overcome by a demon and the thin cord connecting the two being broken. A man awakened suddenly may also collapse due to the fact that the one awakening him did so before the spirit had time to return to the body and his connections were cut off.

Dreams are good and bad, not merely in the sense of being pleasant or unpleasant, but their significance is either favourable or unfavourable. It is good to dream of elephants, Kols say, and of meeting relatives. Dances are welcomed as a part of a dream by some Kols, and others do not attach a good significance to them for they believe somewhat in opposites. Weeping, for example, is good for it means that happiness will come, and to dream of copper coins (the cheapest) is a sure sign that one will get silver ones. To dream of a death is also good, for it means that some one who is ill will soon be well. But it is bad to dream of a dead body or of wood or clay, for these things indicate that there will be a death in the family. Happy experiences in dreams may really mean that tragedies are ahead, and so to dream of a wedding or a hearty laugh is not good. While a dream of copper portends riches, to dream of gold or silver or jewels and ornaments, has the opposite significance. To dream of snakes or fish is also a bad omen.

We asked a number of Kols whether they ever dreamed that they were flying, but none ever had.[1] One said that he had often dreamed of riding a bicytle, though in actual life he had never ridden on one. Another Kol, working in a lime kiln, described a dream in which he went to the house of the superintendent of the kilns and when he entered he found everything he had ever wanted to eat all spread out on the table before him. He said that while in his dream it made him happy, he nevertheless knew that it probably meant that he would be hungry before long.

The gods and goddesses often reveal through dreams the kinds of gifts and sacrifices they would like Kols to give to them. If a *devi* should appear in a dream and demand a chicken or another animal, it would be necessary for the person to offer this. Sometimes the *devi* is asked at the shrine to reveal her will to the person in a dream.

1 Elwin records dreams of flying among the Baigas. *Op. Cit.*, p. 412.